Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01-

Your reference

Our reference

Date

30 May 1990

Salem Azzam Esq
Secretary-General
Islamic Council
16 Grosvenor Crescent
London, SW1 7EP

Dear Mr Azzam,

I have been asked to reply to your letter of 14 May to the Prime Minister about Professor Moncef Ben Salem.

Our embassy in Tunis have made enquiries. Professor Ben Salem was tried on 24 May on charges of "defamation of the public order" and the "malicious spreading of false news with intent to disturb the public order". The court sentenced him on 28 May to two years on the first count, and one year on the second. It is not clear whether the sentences are to be served concurrently.

The United Kingdom takes a close interest in human rights matters, particularly where it is evident that an individual's human rights have been abused. Developments in Tunisia are monitored as in other countries.

We have asked our embassy in Tunis to let us know of any further developments in the case of Professor Ben Salem.

Yours sincerely,

N Baker
Near East and North Africa
Department

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